

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

PETER GERACE, JR.,

Defendant.

Case No. 1:19-cr-227

1:23-cr-37

(LJV)

December 13, 2024

TRANSCRIPT EXCERPT - EXAMINATION OF L.L. (PW #1)
BEFORE THE HONORABLE LAWRENCE J. VILARDO
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

APPEARANCES:

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LAW CLERK:

REBECCA FABIAN IZZO, ESQ.

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Robert H. Jackson Courthouse

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1 (Excerpt commenced at 3:33 p.m.)

2 (Jury is present.)

03:33PM 3 **THE COURT:** The government can call its next witness.

03:33PM 4 **MR. TRIPI:** Just waiting for this witness to exit,

03:33PM 5 Your Honor. Okay. Your Honor, we call L.L.

03:34PM 6

03:34PM 7 **L.L. (PROTECTED WITNESS #1),** having been duly called and

03:34PM 8 sworn, testified as follows:

03:34PM 9 **MR. TRIPI:** Good afternoon, Ms. L.L.

03:34PM 10 May I proceed, Your Honor?

03:34PM 11 **THE COURT:** You may.

03:34PM 12

03:34PM 13 **DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. TRIPI:**

03:34PM 14 Q. Ms. L.L., can you tell us how old you are, and introduce
03:34PM 15 yourself to the jury, please?

03:34PM 16 A. I am 32 years old.

03:34PM 17 Q. And what's your -- what's your name?

03:34PM 18 A. L.L.

03:34PM 19 Q. Ms. L.L., how far have you gone in school?

03:34PM 20 A. I graduated high school at Lake Shore Senior High.

03:34PM 21 Q. Where are you from originally?

03:35PM 22 A. I'm from Cuba, New York.

03:35PM 23 Q. And just geographically, where is that in relation to
03:35PM 24 Buffalo?

03:35PM 25 A. Jamestown, Olean area.

03:35PM 1 Q. Okay. And where did you graduate from high school?

03:35PM 2 A. This was in Angola, New York that I graduated.

03:35PM 3 Q. What was the name of the school?

03:35PM 4 A. Lake Shore Senior High.

03:35PM 5 Q. Did you graduate when you were 18 years old?

03:35PM 6 A. Yes.

03:35PM 7 Q. Have you recently completed further education?

03:35PM 8 A. I did. I went through training to become a peer

03:35PM 9 advocate. And I'm finishing volunteering hours and taking my

03:35PM 10 exam, and then I can go on to working in that field.

03:35PM 11 Q. Is a peer advocate, is that a certification course?

03:36PM 12 A. Yes.

03:36PM 13 Q. And tell the jury what a peer advocate is.

03:36PM 14 A. A peer advocate is somebody who helps people through

03:36PM 15 substance abuse. We help them get resources to rehabs,

03:36PM 16 anything they need. Resource-wise, we will get.

03:36PM 17 Q. And do you have to do some additional volunteer hours

03:36PM 18 before you are able to work in that field?

03:36PM 19 A. Yes.

03:36PM 20 Q. How many volunteer hours do you need to work in the

03:36PM 21 field?

03:36PM 22 A. I need 500.

03:36PM 23 Q. Are you working towards that now?

03:36PM 24 A. Yes.

03:36PM 25 Q. Is that a field that's sort of important to you, given

1 some of things that you've gone through in life?

2 A. Yes. It's very important to me, yes.

3 Q. All right. We'll get into it. But do you have a long
4 history of substance abuse yourself?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Okay. We're going to get into that in more detail. But
7 tell the jury, between sort of high school and where you are
8 today, what types of different work have you done?

9 A. I started out waitressing at, you know, restaurants.
10 Then I went on to retail work. And then I went on to working
11 at Pharaoh's Gentlemen's Club.

12 Q. Okay. We'll get there in a moment. But generally, it
13 was restaurant work and sort of retail work?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. I want to talk a little bit sort of in broad details
16 right now about your drug history, and we'll get into more
17 specifics later, okay?

18 In terms of your drug history, do you have a history of
19 addiction to cocaine and heroin?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Have you tried other drugs?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Would it be fair to say those are the two main drugs that
24 you've struggled with throughout your life?

25 A. Yes.

03:38PM 1 Q. As you sit here today, from heroin, have you been clean
03:38PM 2 for a length of time?

03:38PM 3 A. Yes.

03:38PM 4 Q. What year was your last use of heroin?

03:38PM 5 A. 2019.

03:38PM 6 Q. What was the last year that you had worked at all at
03:38PM 7 Pharaoh's?

03:38PM 8 A. 2019.

03:38PM 9 Q. Could it have been 2018, your last year at Pharaoh's?

03:38PM 10 A. It could have been.

03:38PM 11 Q. Okay. How are you doing as it relates to heroin now?

03:38PM 12 A. I am doing good. I'm still doing a program that's
03:38PM 13 helping me stay clean.

03:38PM 14 Q. Okay. And what's -- generally what's that program?

03:38PM 15 A. That is it's called MAT, medicated assistance treatment.

03:38PM 16 Q. And does that essentially involve you going in the
03:39PM 17 mornings to get a dosage of methadone?

03:39PM 18 A. Yes.

03:39PM 19 Q. And what is that methadone supposed to do for you?

03:39PM 20 A. The methadone is supposed to help so I don't go back to
03:39PM 21 using. It helps with cravings.

03:39PM 22 Q. Okay. Is that what's referred to as sort of a methadone
03:39PM 23 maintenance program?

03:39PM 24 A. Yes.

03:39PM 25 Q. And is the idea of the program over time you use less and

03:39PM 1 less and less so you can eventually not be on that?

03:39PM 2 A. Yes.

03:39PM 3 Q. Did you take your daily methadone under a doctor's

03:39PM 4 supervision this morning?

03:39PM 5 A. Yes.

03:39PM 6 Q. If you weren't to take the methadone, would that have a

03:39PM 7 physical effect on you?

03:39PM 8 A. Yes.

03:39PM 9 Q. Would you be able to concentrate if you didn't take the

03:39PM 10 methadone?

03:39PM 11 A. No.

03:39PM 12 Q. So is that part of your sort of daily routine in order to

03:40PM 13 make sure you're able to function well?

03:40PM 14 A. Yes, absolutely.

03:40PM 15 Q. And have you been clean from cocaine for a while?

03:40PM 16 A. Yes.

03:40PM 17 Q. How long have you been clean from cocaine?

03:40PM 18 A. Since summer. This past summer.

03:40PM 19 Q. Okay. Would it be fair to say that when you have slipups

03:40PM 20 along the way, it's usually cocaine use?

03:40PM 21 A. Yes.

03:40PM 22 Q. You're pretty good at staying away from heroin, right?

03:40PM 23 A. Yes.

03:40PM 24 Q. What's your focus right now? What are you focused on?

03:40PM 25 A. Right now, I'm focused on my kids and furthering my

03:40PM 1 career.

03:40PM 2 Q. You have two kids?

03:40PM 3 A. Two kids.

03:40PM 4 Q. What are their ages?

03:40PM 5 A. Two and five.

03:40PM 6 Q. Do you have custody of one of them?

03:40PM 7 A. Yes.

03:40PM 8 Q. Who has custody of the other?

03:41PM 9 A. My mother.

03:41PM 10 Q. So do you have custody of the two-year old?

03:41PM 11 A. Yes.

03:41PM 12 Q. And does your mother have custody of the five-year old?

03:41PM 13 A. Yes.

03:41PM 14 Q. Is that because during the five-year old's birth period,

03:41PM 15 that's when you were still heavily involved in your drug use?

03:41PM 16 A. Yes.

03:41PM 17 Q. When you were first contact by law enforcement in this

03:41PM 18 case, were you living in Pennsylvania in 2020?

03:41PM 19 A. Yes, I was.

03:41PM 20 Q. Were you living with your mom?

03:41PM 21 A. Yes.

03:41PM 22 Q. When you were first contacted by law enforcement, were

03:41PM 23 you expecting to be contacted?

03:41PM 24 A. No.

03:41PM 25 Q. Did you know how law enforcement learned about you?

03:41PM 1 A. No idea.

03:41PM 2 Q. Were the agents that first contacted you, was it -- was
03:41PM 3 it two state police agents who worked with the FBI named
03:42PM 4 Geraldo Rondon and Angel Benitos-Santos?

03:42PM 5 A. Yes.

03:42PM 6 Q. Did they first meet up with you at your mom's house?

03:42PM 7 A. Yes.

03:42PM 8 Q. During that first meeting, were you asked questions about
03:42PM 9 your experiences and things that happened to you at
03:42PM 10 Pharaoh's?

03:42PM 11 A. Yes.

03:42PM 12 Q. Were they telling you information or were they asking you
03:42PM 13 questions?

03:42PM 14 A. Asking questions.

03:42PM 15 Q. Were you providing the substance of the information back?

03:42PM 16 A. Yes.

03:42PM 17 Q. At that time, after they did that interview with you at
03:42PM 18 your mom's house, were you provided a subpoena to come travel
03:42PM 19 to Buffalo to testify before a federal grand jury?

03:42PM 20 A. Yes.

03:42PM 21 Q. Were you nervous to talk publicly about what happened in
03:42PM 22 your past in the context of Pharaoh's?

03:42PM 23 A. Yes.

03:42PM 24 Q. After you -- after you were first interviewed by Special
03:43PM 25 Agent Rondon, did you text message him and ask him to put you

1 in witness protection if you had to speak publicly?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Did that turn out to not be feasible for you because it

4 would have separated you from your older child, your

5 five-year old?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Are you testifying here today under a subpoena?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Given where you are in your recovery today, if you

10 weren't under subpoena, would you still be here to testify?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Tell them why.

13 A. I would still be here to testify because I have kids, a

14 daughter. I wouldn't want her to ever have to go through

15 something like I did. Or --

16 **MR. SOEHNLEIN:** Objection, Your Honor.

17 **MR. TRIPI:** Can we come up, Judge?

18 **MR. SOEHNLEIN:** Can we come up?

19 (Sidebar discussion held on the record.)

20 **THE COURT:** What's the basis of the objection?

21 **MR. SOEHNLEIN:** It's inappropriate bolstering, Judge.

22 The witness protection thing. And the why are you here to

23 testify. It's just -- it's -- if she wants to talk about

24 facts, if she wants to talk about what happened to her, that's

25 fine. But it's -- it's not appropriate to bolster like this

at the beginning of an examination.

MR. TRIPI: It's not bolstering, and here's why,
Your Honor.

THE COURT: Go ahead.

MR. TRIPI: They opened on all the benefits we gave
witnesses, and they were specifically referencing thousands
and thousands of dollars.

This witness couldn't qualify for WITSEC for a
personal reason, and so the FBI had to find a solution to her
safety concerns and issues down the road, later on, and they
placed her in hotels, and they spent money on her. And
it's -- I don't know, Eric probably has the numbers better
than me, it builds up over time to \$30,000. And so I'm sure
they're going cross-examine her. He's got a huge
cross-examination about this witness.

But her motives for testifying are always, and
sometimes those motives for testifying are cooperation
agreements, but sometimes people want to do the right thing.
Okay? And testify either way.

So it's the same category.

THE COURT: Why isn't that --

MR. TRIPI: It's not bolstering her credibility in
court.

THE COURT: Let me ask.

MR. TRIPI: I'm sorry.

03:45PM 1 **THE COURT:** Why isn't that grounds for redirect? If
03:45PM 2 she's -- if she is cross-examined on that. You're assuming
03:45PM 3 she's going to be cross-examined on it.

03:45PM 4 **MR. TRIPI:** Judge, I've briefed it in my brief. I
03:45PM 5 know it was long and a long time ago. But there's clear
03:45PM 6 2nd Circuit authority and Circuit Court authority to allows us
03:45PM 7 to front things.

03:45PM 8 **THE COURT:** How much longer are you going to go?

03:45PM 9 **MR. TRIPI:** She should be able to answer the question
03:45PM 10 on the table, and then I'm moving on.

03:46PM 11 **MR. FOTI:** Then there's also something particularly
03:46PM 12 prejudicial about the I'm thinking about my own kids, and I'm
03:46PM 13 thinking about --

03:46PM 14 It's one thing to say I want to testify voluntarily,
03:46PM 15 it has nothing to do with the money I've been paid. But to
03:46PM 16 start invoking her children and start saying --

03:46PM 17 **THE COURT:** But if that's the answer, Mr. Foti,
03:46PM 18 that's the answer.

03:46PM 19 **MR. TRIPI:** It can't be like when they like the
03:46PM 20 answer it's allowed to be asked, but when they don't like the
03:46PM 21 answer, it's not.

03:46PM 22 **THE COURT:** The problem is with you asking this now
03:46PM 23 before she's --

03:46PM 24 **MR. TRIPI:** This is how we started with her, like,
03:46PM 25 we've contacted -- this is chronological. Contact her out of

the blue. The first thing she does is give an interview, the next thing she does is send a text message --

THE COURT: But now you're asking her why she's here. And the problem I have is that I think it is bolstering if it's not in response to some cross-examination. So I think you can do this on redirect, I just don't think you can do this now.

MR. TRIPI: I'm allowed -- my last pitch, Judge, is I'm generally allowed to take this thing out of cross waiting until he's batting me over the head with a baseball bat.

THE COURT: You're right on cross, but there's certain things I think that you can't do unless they come out of cross. So if he stays away from this sort of stuff, I don't know that it would come in at all.

MR. COOPER: Judge, I think when the defense opens like they did in this case on witnesses were bought and paid for --

MR. TRIPI: That's what they said, that's a quote.

MR. COOPER: -- and so when they open and put that in front of the jury, because what if he doesn't go there on cross, but he opened in front of the jury and said we bought and paid for witnesses.

THE COURT: And maybe I'm starting to understand, I think, what Mr. Tripi is saying.

So you're saying that this is in response to the

1 argument that she's testifying because of money she got and
2 things that she's got?

3 **MR. COOPER:** Correct. Which was a huge theme, which
4 was a huge theme in the defense opening. Right? That's how
5 they chose to do this case.

6 **MR. TRIPI:** And, Judge, it was effective. And now we
7 have to --

8 **THE COURT:** I'll let her answer this question, but
9 that's it.

10 (Sidebar discussion held on the record.)

11 **THE COURT:** Okay. The objection is overruled.

12 **MR. TRIPI:** Ms. Sawyer, can you please just read back
13 my question so I can get it right?

14 She's going to read the question. Listen to it, and
15 then answer, please.

16 **THE WITNESS:** Okay.

17 (The above-requested testimony was then read by the
18 reporter.)

19 **BY MR. TRIPI:**

20 Q. Is there any more to your answer on that? You can
21 continue with it.

22 A. I'll leave it there.

23 Q. Okay. Now, I want to talk generally about Pharaoh's
24 Gentlemen's Club and your life in terms of your introduction
25 to drugs. And I'm going to get much more specific later on,

03:49PM

1 okay?

03:49PM

2 A. Yes.

03:49PM

3 Q. Did you work at Pharaoh's Gentlemen's Club from

03:49PM

4 approximately 2013 to 2018?

03:49PM

5 A. Yes.

03:49PM

6 Q. Was that for approximately two years steady every day?

03:49PM

7 A. Yes.

03:49PM

8 Q. And for approximately three years after that, was

03:49PM

9 there -- were there some gaps?

03:49PM

10 A. Yes.

03:49PM

11 Q. Describe how much -- how many -- how much gaps you had

03:49PM

12 after the first two years.

03:49PM

13 A. My gaps would be every couple of months.

03:49PM

14 Q. So you'd work there for several months, and then not work

03:49PM

15 there a month; is that what you're explaining?

03:49PM

16 A. Yes.

03:49PM

17 Q. Okay. And then you'd come back, work several months,

03:49PM

18 miss a month; is that the flow?

03:49PM

19 A. Yes.

03:49PM

20 Q. Okay. So would it be fair to say that from 2013 to 2015,

03:50PM

21 you worked steady at Pharaoh's?

03:50PM

22 A. Yes.

03:50PM

23 Q. And from 2016 to approximately 2018, it was that sort of

03:50PM

24 intermittent, you'd miss a month here and there?

03:50PM

25 A. Yes.

03:50PM 1 Q. Where in your life did you become addicted to heroin?

03:50PM 2 A. At Pharaoh's.

03:50PM 3 Q. Did you progress from sniffing it, to then using it

03:50PM 4 intravenously at Pharaoh's?

03:50PM 5 A. Yes.

03:50PM 6 Q. How many times have you done heroin inside Pharaoh's?

03:50PM 7 A. Too many to count.

03:50PM 8 Q. Where in your life did you become addicted to cocaine?

03:50PM 9 A. Pharaoh's.

03:50PM 10 Q. How many times in your life have you done cocaine inside

03:50PM 11 Pharaoh's?

03:50PM 12 A. Too many to count.

03:50PM 13 Q. Generally, again -- and I'll ask you about specifics

03:50PM 14 later, probably Monday at this point, okay -- have you

03:50PM 15 engaged in sex acts in exchange for drugs and/or money with

03:51PM 16 men in your life?

03:51PM 17 A. Yes.

03:51PM 18 Q. Where did you first engage in commercial sex acts with

03:51PM 19 men for drugs and money?

03:51PM 20 A. At Pharaoh's.

03:51PM 21 Q. What did you get for it?

03:51PM 22 A. I would get drugs or money.

03:51PM 23 Q. Sometimes both?

03:51PM 24 A. Yes.

03:51PM 25 Q. Approximately how many times did you engage in sex acts

03:51PM 1 inside Pharaoh's in exchange for drugs and/or money?

03:51PM 2 A. Too many to count.

03:51PM 3 Q. Had you ever done that prior to working at Pharaoh's?

03:51PM 4 A. No.

03:51PM 5 Q. Did you do that because your addiction became very bad at
03:52PM 6 Pharaoh's?

03:52PM 7 A. Yes.

03:52PM 8 Q. Did you do that for money for drugs?

03:52PM 9 A. Yes.

03:52PM 10 Q. Did you do it for favoritism at Pharaoh's?

03:52PM 11 A. Yes.

03:52PM 12 Q. Explain the favoritism part for them.

03:52PM 13 A. So, a favorite basically is somebody -- there were a
03:52PM 14 couple girls that were favorites. The ones that would do
03:52PM 15 whatever we were asked to do there. Things in the back room
03:52PM 16 that we weren't supposed to do, if you would do them, you're
03:52PM 17 a favorite.

03:52PM 18 Q. Whose favorite were you?

03:52PM 19 A. I was Peter's favorite.

03:52PM 20 Q. Do you see him in court?

03:52PM 21 A. Yes.

03:52PM 22 Q. Can you point to him and describe an article of clothing
03:52PM 23 he's wearing?

03:52PM 24 A. Whitish/tannish tie.

03:53PM 25 Q. Is he in the middle there?

03:53PM 1 A. Yes.

03:53PM 2 **MR. TRIPI:** May the record reflect the witness
03:53PM 3 identified the defendant?

03:53PM 4 **THE COURT:** It does.

03:53PM 5 **BY MR. TRIPI:**

03:53PM 6 Q. Prior to working at Pharaoh's, had you used heroin?

03:53PM 7 A. No.

03:53PM 8 Q. Prior to working at Pharaoh's, were you addicted to
03:53PM 9 heroin?

03:53PM 10 A. No.

03:53PM 11 Q. Prior to working at Pharaoh's, had you used cocaine?

03:53PM 12 A. No.

03:53PM 13 Q. Prior to working at Pharaoh's, were you addicted to
03:53PM 14 cocaine?

03:53PM 15 A. No.

03:53PM 16 Q. Where did all of those things start becoming and take
03:53PM 17 over your life?

03:53PM 18 A. At Pharaoh's.

03:53PM 19 Q. Was the plan when you walked into Pharaoh's at about --
03:53PM 20 how old were you?

03:53PM 21 A. 20.

03:53PM 22 Q. Was the plan when you walked into Pharaoh's at age 20 to
03:53PM 23 become severely addicted to heroin and cocaine, and to
03:53PM 24 perform sex acts on men in exchange for drugs and money?

03:53PM 25 A. No.

03:53PM 1 Q. Did you have that as your life plan?

03:53PM 2 A. No.

03:53PM 3 Q. Was that someone you were turned into at Pharaoh's?

03:53PM 4 A. Yes.

03:54PM 5 Q. We've identified the defendant. What was his position at

03:54PM 6 Pharaoh's while you were there?

03:54PM 7 A. The owner.

03:54PM 8 Q. Where's Pharaoh's located?

03:54PM 9 A. 999 Aero Drive in Cheektowaga.

03:54PM 10 Q. Is that over near the airport?

03:54PM 11 A. Yes.

03:54PM 12 Q. How did you first start to come working there?

03:54PM 13 A. Friend and I, named A.A., we heard about it, and we went

03:54PM 14 to audition.

03:54PM 15 Q. Was that audition like?

03:54PM 16 A. We had to do three -- three songs on the stage. And then

03:54PM 17 the manager would decide if they wanted to keep you.

03:55PM 18 Q. Did you get hired?

03:55PM 19 A. Yes.

03:55PM 20 Q. Did A.A. get hired?

03:55PM 21 A. Yes.

03:55PM 22 Q. When did you start?

03:55PM 23 A. The next day.

03:55PM 24 Q. After you started, what was your schedule like at first?

03:55PM 25 A. I could work as much as I want, I was doing seven days a

03:55PM

1 week.

03:55PM

2 Q. Were you working 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.?

03:55PM

3 A. Yes.

03:55PM

4 Q. I've asked you about cocaine and heroin. I want to go a

03:55PM

5 little further with those at Pharaoh's.

03:55PM

6 How long after starting work at Pharaoh's did you begin

03:55PM

7 using cocaine?

03:55PM

8 A. Just a few days in.

03:55PM

9 Q. How long after that did you become addicted to it where

03:55PM

10 you used it every day?

03:55PM

11 A. Two months.

03:55PM

12 Q. How long after starting work at Pharaoh's did you begin

03:56PM

13 using heroin?

03:56PM

14 A. Couple days.

03:56PM

15 Q. How long after that did you become addicted to it every

03:56PM

16 day?

03:56PM

17 A. Same. Couple months.

03:56PM

18 Q. Eventually were you taking heroin intravenously inside

03:56PM

19 Pharaoh's?

03:56PM

20 A. Yes.

03:56PM

21 Q. Was it a daily habit?

03:56PM

22 A. Yes.

03:56PM

23 Q. Did you use heroin and cocaine daily?

03:56PM

24 A. Yes.

03:56PM

25 Q. Explain how we -- how you would use those two drugs both

1 during the course of a day. Walk them through a day.

2 A. Okay. So, you wake up. The first thing you have to do
3 is go get heroin, because you wake up physically sick from
4 not having it for so many hours. So you have to do that.

5 Then when you do start feeling a little bit better from
6 the heroin, then your body wants the cocaine. So then you
7 have to do that.

8 Which, by the time I was shooting both of them, so it
9 made my arms different colors, and it just started -- I was
10 just looking really bad after a while.

11 Q. Would you have to use the heroin in the beginning and
12 then cocaine during your shift?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Why did you primarily use cocaine during your shift?

15 A. The cocaine would keep us awake and keep you going.

16 Q. So morning heroin, work shift cocaine. And then what
17 happens at the end of the night?

18 A. At the end of the night, you have to use heroin again to
19 be able to calm down from all the cocaine.

20 Q. How frequently do you need the cocaine through the course
21 of a shift when you're working 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.?

22 A. Well, the high only lasts ten minutes, so you're chasing
23 it.

24 Q. What do you mean by that?

25 A. You're chasing it every ten minutes. Your body wants

03:58PM 1 more and more and more, so you focus more on that sometimes
03:58PM 2 than working.

03:58PM 3 Q. Are you familiar with the term "dope sick?"

03:58PM 4 A. Yes.

03:58PM 5 Q. What does that term mean?

03:58PM 6 A. That means when you're in withdrawal from having no
03:58PM 7 drugs.

03:58PM 8 Q. Can you explain the sickness from heroin withdrawal to
03:58PM 9 this jury?

03:58PM 10 A. Yes. Sickness, you first start to feel hot and cold
03:58PM 11 flashes. Then it gets to the point where you're really,
03:58PM 12 really less -- restless and full of anxiety so you can't,
03:58PM 13 like, sit down. You don't want to lay down. You don't want
03:58PM 14 to get up, though, because your body hurts. You have many
03:58PM 15 aches and pains. Diarrhea, you're throwing up, you're
03:59PM 16 dehydrated. You can't eat.

03:59PM 17 I always say like the flu times ten. That's the best I
03:59PM 18 can try to put it.

03:59PM 19 Q. Did you ever get COVID?

03:59PM 20 A. Yeah.

03:59PM 21 Q. Is it a lot worse than that?

03:59PM 22 A. Yes.

03:59PM 23 Q. Do you get the chills?

03:59PM 24 A. Yes.

03:59PM 25 Q. Do you get cramps?

03:59PM 1 A. Yes.

03:59PM 2 Q. When you're withdrawing, are you able to think straight?

03:59PM 3 A. No.

03:59PM 4 Q. Is that -- is that a sickness and a pain that you fear?

03:59PM 5 A. Yes.

03:59PM 6 Q. Is that something you want to avoid at all costs?

03:59PM 7 A. Yes.

03:59PM 8 Q. How bad -- explain for this jury, how bad did you want to

03:59PM 9 avoid that withdrawal feeling that you just described?

03:59PM 10 A. I would have done anything not to feel that way, and

03:59PM 11 that's what I did.

03:59PM 12 Q. Once you're addicted, is it a daily fear that you go

03:59PM 13 through that you would do anything to avoid that withdrawal

03:59PM 14 feeling?

03:59PM 15 A. Yes.

03:59PM 16 Q. Is it a feeling of desperation for you?

04:00PM 17 A. Yes.

04:00PM 18 Q. Over time, did you develop scarring from heroin use on

04:00PM 19 your arms?

04:00PM 20 A. Yes.

04:00PM 21 Q. I apologize to ask, but would you mind standing up to

04:00PM 22 show the jury your arms?

04:00PM 23 **MR. TRIPI:** And if counsel needs to see it.

04:00PM 24 May the record reflect the witness is holding up her

04:00PM 25 sleeve showing her arms to the jury.

04:00PM 1 **THE WITNESS:** That's with about four years of, you
04:00PM 2 know, healing. It's four years of healing.

04:00PM 3 **BY MR. TRIPI:**

04:00PM 4 Q. How do those scars develop that are on your arms?

04:00PM 5 A. They develop by when you try to shoot IV, if you miss,
04:00PM 6 that's what happens.

04:00PM 7 Q. You miss a vein, in other words?

04:00PM 8 A. Yes.

04:00PM 9 Q. And you try again, so you puncture yourself again?

04:00PM 10 A. And you try again, and again, again, yes.

04:01PM 11 Q. Eventually do you've got to try different spots on your
04:01PM 12 arms?

04:01PM 13 A. Yes.

04:01PM 14 Q. Is that why they call it track, because you could track
04:01PM 15 the scars up and down your arms?

04:01PM 16 A. Yes.

04:01PM 17 Q. Eventually, do your veins collapse?

04:01PM 18 A. Yes.

04:01PM 19 Q. When that happens and your veins collapse in your arms,
04:01PM 20 what do you do next?

04:01PM 21 A. It's called skin popping and/or muscle popping.

04:01PM 22 Q. And what does that mean?

04:01PM 23 A. Both. Where you just put anywhere in your skin, anywhere
04:01PM 24 that you can, or you find a muscle and do it in there.

04:01PM 25 Q. Does that hurt?

04:01PM 1 A. Yes.

04:01PM 2 Q. Does that cause bruising?

04:01PM 3 A. Yes.

04:01PM 4 Q. When you lose the -- when the veins in your arms

04:01PM 5 collapse, do you go to your legs?

04:01PM 6 A. Yes.

04:01PM 7 Q. Does all of that cause visible scarring over time on your

04:01PM 8 arms and legs at the injection sites?

04:01PM 9 A. Yes.

04:01PM 10 Q. Was that scarring developing while you were at Pharaoh's?

04:01PM 11 A. Yes.

04:01PM 12 Q. By 2015, was it visible?

04:02PM 13 A. Yes.

04:02PM 14 **MR. TRIPI:** Judge, it's 4:01. I can stop or keep
04:02PM 15 going, it's up to you.

04:02PM 16 **THE COURT:** Is this a good spot for you, Mr. Tripi?

04:02PM 17 **MR. TRIPI:** It's fine.

04:02PM 18 **THE COURT:** So we'll break now for the weekend.

04:02PM 19 Remember my instructions, folks. Please don't talk
04:02PM 20 about this case with anyone, including each other. Don't use
04:02PM 21 tools of technology to learn anything about the case or to
04:02PM 22 communicate about the case. Don't read or watch or listen to
04:02PM 23 any news coverage of the case, if there is any, while the
04:02PM 24 trial is progress. And don't make up your mind.

04:02PM 25 Again, we're going to start at 9:30 on Monday only

1 because I've got lots of other matters that I need to handle
2 on Monday morning, and I'm going to do it quickly, so we're
3 going to start at 9:30, but we're going to go until maybe
4 5:30. We're gonna try to go to keep to that schedule that I
5 told you about earlier. So be prepared to stay a little later
6 next week if you have to. Okay?

7 Have a great weekend. Get a good night's sleep. And
8 please don't talk to anybody about this case. We're so close
9 now, don't blow it.

10 And, Go Bills!

11 (Jury excused at 4:03 p.m.)

12 **THE COURT:** Okay.

13 **MR. COOPER:** Judge, I'd just ask the witness to stay
14 for a second.

15 **THE COURT:** Yes.

16 So, ma'am, don't talk to any -- if you have a lawyer,
17 you can always talk to your lawyer, but you don't talk to
18 anybody other than your lawyer about your testimony over the
19 weekend.

20 **THE WITNESS:** Yes, sir.

21 **MR. TRIPI:** Judge, I just want to clarify. There
22 will be discussions about logistics getting her here.

23 **THE COURT:** Yes.

24 **MR. TRIPI:** So, Ms. L.L., if you communicate, it's
25 just about when they're getting you, when -- where you need to

04:04PM 1 be, nothing about your testimony, okay?

04:04PM 2 **THE WITNESS:** Okay.

04:04PM 3 **MR. TRIPI:** Thank you very much.

04:04PM 4 **THE COURT:** You can talk about how you're gonna get
04:04PM 5 here, when you're gonna get here, stuff like that. Time and
04:04PM 6 logistics. But that's it.

04:04PM 7 **THE WITNESS:** Okay.

04:04PM 8 **THE COURT:** Okay?

04:04PM 9 **THE WITNESS:** Got it.

04:04PM 10 **THE COURT:** Got it. Okay.

04:04PM 11 Anything more from the government?

04:04PM 12 **MR. TRIPI:** No, Judge.

04:04PM 13 **THE COURT:** Anything more from the defense?

04:04PM 14 **MR. SOEHNLEIN:** Just we submitted a letter last night
04:04PM 15 with regard to scope of cross. And I think that that's
04:04PM 16 something that maybe we should hash out on Monday before the
04:04PM 17 witness testifies, or whenever the Court wants to do it.

04:04PM 18 **MR. TRIPI:** Yeah, I think Monday makes sense, Judge,
04:04PM 19 that's fine by me. We've got a ways to go. But I would want
04:04PM 20 to know before the end of direct, that's all.

04:04PM 21 **THE COURT:** Yeah. And we will talk about that. You
04:04PM 22 know, get here a little early on Monday. If I can finish the
04:04PM 23 three matters I have scheduled for 9 --

04:04PM 24 They're all at 9:00, right?

04:04PM 25 **THE CLERK:** Yeah.

04:04PM

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THE COURT: So I have three matters scheduled at

04:04PM

2

9:00. If I can finish them before 9:30, we'll start before

04:05PM

3

9:30 with the argument. Okay?

04:05PM

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MR. TRIPI: Okay.

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THE COURT: Great. Thanks, folks.

04:05PM

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THE CLERK: All rise.

04:05PM

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(Off the record at 4:05 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

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In accordance with 28, U.S.C., 753(b), I

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certify that these original notes are a true and correct

18

record of proceedings in the United States District Court for

19

the Western District of New York on December 13, 2024.

20

21

s/ Ann M. Sawyer

22

Ann M. Sawyer, FCRR, RPR, CRR

23

Official Court Reporter

24

U.S.D.C., W.D.N.Y.

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